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FM REO HILLAH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0579
INFO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0564
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEHIHL/REO HILLAH 0628

C O N F I D E N T I A L HILLAH 000048

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/23/2016

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SUBJECT: KARBALA COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES MEMBERS' BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

CLASSIFIED BY: GARY ANDERSON, ACTING REGIONAL COORDINATOR, REO, AL-HILLAH, STATE.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (U) In the December 15, 2005 elections, residents of Karbala province cast their votes to fill six seats in the new Council of Representatives (CoR). They elected five members from the Shi'a Islamist United Iraqi Alliance coalition list (UIA, ballot number 555), and one from the National Iraqi List (ballot number 731), which is led by former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi. Biographic information for the six CoR representatives follows. UIA members are listed in descending order according to their rank on the UIA ticket in Karbala.

¶2. (C) Reyad Abdul Hamza Razzak Ghareeb (male) ran as the number one candidate on the UIA ticket in Karbala. He is a leading member of SCIRI (the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq) and has strong links to the Badr Organization. Ghareeb reportedly moved to Iran in the 1970s, where he joined the Badr Organization. He returned to Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein.

¶3. (SBU) Mouter Hassan Hussein Al-Hakim (male) was the number two UIA candidate in Karbala. He is in his 40s or early 50s. Al-Hakim served as Karbala Provincial Governor for three to four weeks under the CPA in 2003 or 2004. He is an independent Islamist from the Office of Sistani in Karbala. Al-Hakim was elected to the Karbala Provincial Council in the January 30, 2005 elections. In the Provincial Council, he served as the head of the Reconstruction Committee but was not active in the work of the committee. Al-Hakim is a descendant of Mohammed and is considered pious by many of his colleagues. He spends a significant amount of time working in the twin shrines in downtown Karbala, which are run by senior Sistani-affiliated clerics. Prior to the December 2005 election, Al-Hakim was willing to meet with REO Al Hillah staff, but he was somewhat guarded during the conversation.

¶4. (C) Bushra Jabar Badan (female) ran as the number three candidate on the UIA slate (NOTE: Electoral rules dictated that the number three position on every list be filled by a female candidate. END NOTE). She is a member of the Islamic Fadila (or Virtue) party, which is considered the "moderate" stream among those affiliated with radical anti-American cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr (NOTE: The Islamic Fadila party reportedly follows the teachings of Moqtada's father, Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq Al-Sadr, a well-respected senior Shi'a cleric who was killed during Saddam's rule, rather than Moqtada himself. END NOTE). Prior to the election, she worked as an Iraqi government employee in Karbala.

¶5. (C) Shiekh Tahseen Hameed Khaleef Al-Yasseri (male) is a follower of Moqtada Al-Sadr. He is reportedly a member or ex-member of the Mahdi Militia.

¶6. (U) Hashim Ridha Ali (male) ran as the number five candidate on the UIA list in Karbala. Prior to the December 2005 election, he was the Director-General of Education for Karbala. Ali was a member of the Provincial Council in 2003 and/or 2004.

¶7. (SBU) Sheikh Sa'ad Safouk Al-Masoudi (male) is the sole CoR delegate from Karbala who is not from the UIA. He is a member of the National Iraqi List. Al-Masoudi was born in 1949 in Karbala. He graduated in 1975 with a law degree from the Arab University of Beirut and began practicing law in Karbala in ¶1975. Al-Masoudi is married and has six children. He is a tribal leader with a secular worldview who is very comfortable working with the Coalition. In April 2003, CPA officials appointed Al-Masoudi to the Provincial Council. After he announced his intention to run for the office of Governor, there was an attempt on his life on July 13, 2003 in which he was shot twice in the stomach. Al-Masoudi served as Deputy Governor starting in November 2003. In February 2004, Provincial Council members selected him to be Governor. He remained in that position until shortly after the January 2005 elections. While he was Governor, and after he stepped down in early 2005, Al-Masoudi was a strong supporter of NGOs in Karbala, including the Karbala Women's Center, which was a CPA era initiative.

ANDERSON